Reasons the Communists won

Lack of US commanders/soldiers

Military tech found its way into the hands of the communists (Japanese and American)

Not enough Money

Communists had the support of the people because they had fought the Japanese

CCP had social and economic policies that favoured the workers (reduce Rent, give land to the peasants)

Guomindang collapse

Guomindang alienated the students/intellectuals/urban elite (through corruption and economic collapse)

Guomindang forced labour and conscription on the peasants

Chiang was corrupt and inept

Key terms

Mao Zedong/Tse Tung

Chiang Kai-Shek/Jiang Jieshi

Kuomindang/Guomindang/Guomintang/Kuomintang

CCP

Breakdown

1934-5 Long March – 90% die, Mao left as the sole leader of the CCP

Before the War, Chiang was seen by America as a friend in SE Asia, a man who would bring about a Capitalist China.

Second world war – Guomindang and CCP allie against the Japanese, but it doesn’t work properly. The GMD is supplied with weapons and arms from America, but the CCP isn’t. Chiang uses it to fight CCP, not Japan, while CCP is fighting Japan – improves their standing.

1944 – First contact between the CCP and American forces – Americans are impressed, but public opinion in the USA won’t allow US support of Communists.

At Yalta and Potsdam, Russia had been promised land in SE Asia, in exchange for their help in crushing Japan. The Bomb meant this help wasn’t required, but aided McCarthy’s crazy views, as it looked like they were helping USSR, and being weak.

1945, War ends and Nationalist China gets a seat at the UN. US (via Marshall) tries to get the two sides in China to get on, but the talks collapse, civil war resumes – not good for America, who are interested in Europe, not SE Asia

Marshall was sent to try resolve the two sides, but wasn’t possible – Mao wanted no Nationalist Army, Chiang wanted the CCP army under his control. Chiang was over confident in his support from America, while Mao disliked that Chiang had American support.

Chiang ordered the Japanese to surrender to Nationalists rather than Communists, and would be responsible for law and order until they did. (further damaged Chiangs reputation). American Air force airlifted Chiangs troops to key cities (Beijing,Nanjing,Shanghai) USSR had also stripped Manchuria, collapsing the Chinese economy. Manchuria had been under USSR control (hindering Chiangs forces), and they slowly withdrew to give Chinese communists time to take power.

Corruption among nationalist officials was rife, but the Americans still preferred them to the communists

Most American kit was lost and ended up in communist hands

Nationalist army looted and were arrogant – not popular with people, and had to use force to retain power. Chiang appointed Generals based on loyalty rather than ability.

CCP had land reform, democracy, freedom, low rent.

In 1947, Marshall reduced aid to Chiang, but the GMD had some success. However, they were ultimately rubbish, and corrupt, (the latter preventing decent economic reform)

China was 14th Strategically Significant State in 1947 (Japan 13, Korea 14, top 7 all in Europe)

By 1949, America knew it had backed the wrong side. They were increasingly reluctant to support him, but there was a China Lobby, republicans who believed America was being a bit too Pro communist...This resulted in 570 Million $ going to GMD, but it wasn’t enough, and led to CCP seeing America as an interfering outsider, and the Republicans seeing the State Department as having betrayed Chiang Kai-Shek.

1st October 1949 – PRC declared. In December, Jiang fled to Taiwan. At first, America wasn’t fussed by this turn of events, but

Aftermath – McCarthyism – this year also saw the first Russian A bomb and signs of USSR spies in America. (esp Manhattan project)

Containment became a blanket policy – all communism is the same (despite their own wartime experience).

Stalin had supported GMD during the war, and USSR had looted Manchuria, thoroughly irritating the Chinese. America failed to recognise this little issue, driving Mao into a Sino-Soviet Pact